



Knight Letter

THE LEWIS CARROLL SOCIETY

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SMITHSONIAN HOSTS CARROLL LECTURES

The Smithsonian Institution, in conjunction with the Lewis Carroll Society of North America, will host a series of lectures on the life and works of Charles Dodgson as part of their Campus on the Mall Program in 1993.

The program, which will consist of six lectures, has been coordinated by Fay Browning of the Smithsonian and former LCSNA president August Imholtz. Lectures will be on Thursday nights at 8 pm, beginning on January 28. The series will include an introductory lecture on Dodgson's life and works by LCSNA president Charles Lovett (Jan. 28), a separate lecture on each of the *Alice* books by Prof. John Pfordresher of Georgetown University (Feb. 4 & 11), a talk on the illustrators of *Alice* and their interpretations of the book by LCSNA member Stephanie Lovett (Feb. 18), a presentation on various *Alice* films by former LCSNA president David Schaefer (Feb. 25), and a lecture by Mr. Imholtz on *The Hunting of the Snark*, *Sylvie and Bruno*, and other Carroll works (March 4).

Ms. Browning says that the Campus on the Mall lectures generally attract from 50 to 500 people, making this an excellent opportunity to publicize the LCSNA.

The LCSNA is pleased to take an active role in this exciting series which will bring the world of Charles Dodgson to all those who attend. For further information on this series, call the Smithsonian at (202) 357-3030.

Diverse Topics at SF Meeting

West Coast Gathering Attracts Crowd

by August Imholtz

The place was the Donohue Rare Book Room of the Gleeson Library of the University of San Francisco and the date was October 17. Ben Watson, rare book librarian of the Gleeson Library, welcomed us warmly on a beautiful San Francisco afternoon and then turned the meeting over to Charles Lovett, president of the LCSNA, who thanked the University of San Francisco for hosting our meeting and Dr. Sandor G. Burstein for coordinating the program and exhibiting a fascinating selection of items from his own superb Carroll collection.

"Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" These existential questions were answered, more or less, by our first speaker, Mr. David Rosenbaum, former president of the Continental Historical Society and now editor of its newsletter. The CHS supports the position that the two *Alice*

books were the intellectual creation of Queen Victoria—a thesis expounded by Mr. Rosenbaum in a printed paper distributed at the meeting. Despite the heading "A Speech Delivered to the Lewis Carroll Society of North America," the paper was not given by Mr. Rosenbaum, who chose instead to summarize the publicity the CHS has received and to challenge the LCSNA to accept his assertions. As for identifying the CHS itself, Mr. Rosenbaum stated that it consists of twelve members whose identity is confidential (though a few names were revealed) and that membership is now closed. Mr. Rosenbaum let slip the information that membership remains closed because of the potential for financial gain from the society's assertions—presenting



Mark Burstein and Rebecca White

a possible explanation for his dogged pursuit of his bizarre claim: that it is based on business opportunities rather than academic realities. Mr. Rosenbaum's threat that a failure by the LCSNA to recognize Queen Victoria as author of *Alice* was met with about as much trepidation as the Queen of Hearts' threat to cut off Alice's head—the members present seemed to think he and his cohorts nothing more than a pack of cards.

Jacqueline Giuffré, our next speaker, brought us back to the magic of Lewis Carroll's creations through flowers. Ms. Giuffré is a professional sculptor who is also the principal designer for the Sonoma County, California, Hall of Flowers

(continued on page 2)



Editorial— *Man Behind the Curtain*

A reader wrote me recently to ask if she could assume that all unsigned pieces in the *Knight Letter* were by the editor. A good question, especially as most of our pieces are unsigned. The answer is most definitely yes, and I hope that, especially in the case of book reviews, readers will recognize that the opinions reflected are solely my own and may not concur with yours or, in fact, with anyone else's.

In this issue for example, I'm afraid I am not particularly kind to Whoopi Goldberg's book *Alice*, which the *New York Times Book Review* called "delightful . . . with a witty political bite throughout . . . a satisfying story about the things that really matter in life." They did, however, agree with my assessment that the illustrations are "sometimes funnier than the text itself."

The point here is not that either I or the *Times* is right, but that much of the content of the *Knight Letter* is based on opinions, and those opinions are my own. In assembling each issue I must sort through scores of contributions, new products, books, and other tidbits to decide what is worthy of inclusion. Invariably, interesting pieces end up on the cutting room floor, but such is the nature of editing. My opinions are also necessarily reflected in book and product reviews and, although diehard collectors will generally buy a book no matter how bad it is, I am not content to simply print rosy descriptions of books which I feel are not up to par.

The wonderful thing about opinions is that you, the readers, can take issue with them, consider them, argue about them among yourselves, and, of course, formulate opinions of your own. In any society as eclectic as our own we must, in many cases, agree to disagree, but I am always happy to consider the opinions of the readers, regardless of how at odds they may be with my own.

As I enter my second term as LCSNA president, I hope that you will let me hear from you, tell me what I'm doing wrong (and perhaps what I'm doing right) and that together we can continue to make this a dynamic, growing society.

MEETING (continued from page 1)

show. Her recent presentation of scenes from the *Alice* books was seen by over 400,000 people. She explained her planning—how she worked with a scene, like the Mad Tea Party, and made it intriguingly different but essentially recognizable to child and adult. She showed how she modeled the exhibitions in miniature and then had the models scanned by a computer; then a computer driven router cut sections of lightweight foam rubber which became the giant figures. The exhibition also included a White Rabbit's cottage with a real thatched roof and many other delights—even a Queen of Hearts with her face a tessellated field of red chili peppers!

Then it was back to criticism, but this time higher criticism with an appropriately Carrollian twist—humor. Mark Burstein summarized and evaluated various papers on the *Alice* books that he had originally written while a university student in the late 1960s. His talk was entitled "To Catch a Bandersnatch"—what all "interpretations" or "readings" of literary texts attempt. From Plato to Zen, with stops at the Freudian, Tao, Joycean, Jungian, and Sufi railway stations, Mr. Burstein showed how the *Alice* books can be read. Of the chapters he summarized, my favorite is his "Joyce Carroll Noates" in which he deconstructs Alice's name from its "Greek root" through Latin allusions and ends with All Us Ions—everyone remembers Plato's Ion. He brought a few printed copies of his talk which were enlivened, if anything could further enliven his Senecan prose, by copies of some of Walt Kelly's original Wonderland drawings with Pogo characters—another interpretation.

John Wilcox-Baker brought us up to date on the progress of the Lewis Carroll Birthplace Trust. In 1993 the birthplace land, purchased by the trust, will be opened to the public. There remains, however, much to be done and we will be hearing from the U.S. Lewis Carroll Foundation later as to how we might contribute.

The most recent publication of the LCSNA was, of course, *The Hunting of the Snark*, illustrated by Jonathan Dixon, who was our next speaker. Mr. Dixon

explained how he became interested in the *Snark* after he read the poem in a text without illustrations. Like most of us, he had difficulty in understanding some parts of it, but it interested him so much he decided to illustrate it and what is more, in the face of current artistic and critical dogma, to be faithful to the author's intentions. He immersed himself in Carroll's works and the representations of other illustrators, and finally produced his own first sketches, of which he showed us several slides. He clearly had a great deal of fun with these illustrations. In the spirit of Carroll he parodies other artists' paintings (e.g., Maxfield Parrish's "Day-break" for the bathing machines reference)—quoting T. S. Eliot he said "poor artists borrow, great artists steal." The court of the Barrister's dream is based on Goya's "The Sleep of Reason" with the addition of Carl Jung as judge. The Snark Island on the cover, when turned ninety degrees, reveals the profile of Charles Dodgson. There are many more Carrollian twists and delights to be discovered in Jonathan Dixon's *Snark*.

Three years to the day before our meeting, San Francisco experienced a disastrous earthquake in the toll of whose damage was the wreck of the Geary Theatre where George Coates' play *Right Mind* had just opened. Fortunately, no one was injured at the theatre, and we were privileged to hear the young star of the production, Rebecca White. Now fifteen years old, Ms. White recounted her experiences in preparing for the role, learning about Lewis Carroll, the right side of his mind and the left, the multiple aspects of his personality (mathematician, theatregoer, photographer, and friend of children), and the delightful wonder of his creations. She danced and sang a number of songs from the play, giving us such a brilliant performance that there was the sense that we would hear more of Ms. White in the future.

Following the meeting, a reception in the Donohue Room, hosted by Father William Monihan, gave members a chance to exchange ideas and merchandise, to view once again the spectacular exhibition of treasures from Dr. Burstein's Carroll collection, and to thank all those who helped make this a memorable afternoon in the City by the Bay.

OF BOOKS & THINGS



Long Awaited Bibliography Published

Much of a Muchness—A Survey of the American Editions of the Alice Books Published from 1866 to 1960, by Byron Sewell in collaboration with Hilda Bohem, and with an introduction by Sandor Burstein, has been published by Chicken Little's Press in an edition of 17 copies. Readers familiar with Mr. Sewell's previous work will know that Chicken Little is his private imprint which has brought us such delights in the past as *Fat Alice*, *The King Sandor Bible*, and *Alice's Adventures in Oceania*. Mr. Sewell's new bibliography, over a decade in the making, is a milestone in the study of the publication history of *Alice*, and we can only hope that the book will see a second printing which will bring it to a wider audience. Drawing on numerous collections and a wide range of bibliographical references, particularly the *Publisher's Trade List Annual*, he gives a publisher-by-publisher rundown of American *Alices*. Within each publisher, various series in which *Alice* appeared are identified and points of priority are given for identifying various printings and editions. The author writes that editions are listed in "postulated chronological order," but as there is a complete lack of previous bibliographical description of the majority of these editions, the well educated postulations of Mr. Sewell are a giant leap forward for lovers of American *Alices*. This book contains a vast amount of information and so is necessarily somewhat complicated by various abbreviations and charts, but the patient collector will be able to date most undated American editions on his shelves and will find the time spent researching editions with this tool well spent. Many thanks to Mr. Sewell, Dr. Bohem, and all the other collectors who assisted with this impressive and important volume.

Two By Disney

The Walt Disney Company continues to churn out Alice-related books, but their two latest offerings are of more interest than usual. The first is a separately published edition of *Jabberwocky* illustrated with uncredited art from the Disney Archives, part of a series of similarly illustrated books. The book is well designed, with black pages and boldly colored illustrations. The pictures are crude by Disney standards, but this gives them a power normally lacking from Disney publications. While a few of the pictures harken back to the 1951 animated film of *Alice*, most are unlike anything Disneyphiles have seen before,

looking almost like a talented child's crayon drawings. Also from Disney is *Alice's Tea Party* by Lyn Calder. In our house we had to debate whether this book belonged in the Carroll collection or the Tea collection, as it includes a Disney version of "A Mad Tea Party" followed by information about tea and a variety of activities, recipes, and other ideas for throwing a tea party. The familiar Disney figures have been redrawn in a much softer than usual manner by Jesse Clay, who also adds decorations and additional illustrations which give the book a warm, pastel look. Though I am not always a fan of the Disney interpretation of Carroll's works, I found these two volumes worthy additions to my collection.

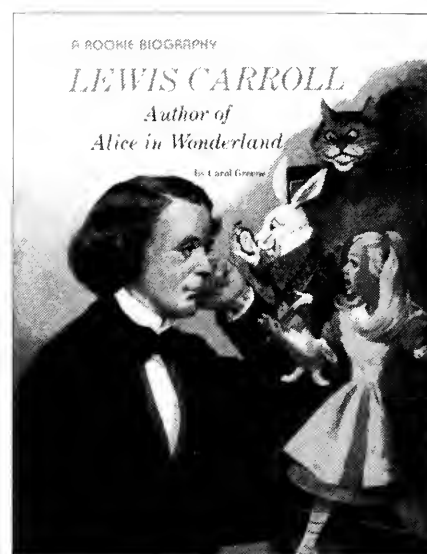
Whoopi Goldberg Does Alice

If store displays are any indication of future sales, Whoopi Goldberg's first book for children, *Alice*, should be a hot seller this Christmas, for it seems to be plastered in the front windows of bookstores everywhere. The book has been portrayed in the popular press as a hip, urban retelling of Lewis Carroll's famous story, but the book itself makes no such claim. The jacket copy states only that "This isn't Wonderland." Ms. Goldberg's book does include a large rabbit (who, in the text, bears more resemblance to Harvey than to the White Rabbit), a friend of Alice's named Robin (who happens to wear a large hat), and a room which shrinks. Other characters might be inspired, in the loosest imaginable way, by Tweedledee and Tweedledum, and the Queen of Hearts. Without the chosen name of the title character, however, one wonders if this book would have rated any comparison to Carroll. The story is of Alice's journey into Manhattan to cash in a winning lottery ticket. Along the way she discovers that the world is full of crazy things and the happiness she sought was right around her all along (yes, it does seem more like *The Wizard of Oz* than *Alice in Wonderland*). If anything about this rather mundane book can be considered Carrollian, it is the dynamic illustrations of John Rocco who, in spite of the fact that this is his first book, too, manages to produce pictures which far outshine the text. In Rocco's bright pastel illustrations many of the characters who seem in the text to be only vaguely related to *Alice in Wonderland* take on a look reminiscent of the inhabitants of Carroll's dream land. This reviewer would much rather have seen Mr. Rocco illustrate an edition of *Alice in Wonderland* and Ms. Goldberg stick to acting.

A Biography of Carroll for Beginning Readers

Lewis Carroll Author of Alice in Wonderland by Carol Greene has been published by Children's Press as part of the Rookie Biography series. The series is designed for very young readers which makes reading this book something akin to reading *The Nursery Alice*. Not being a beginning reader, I am not able to judge how the book succeeds in its task of appealing to that group, but it does cover the basic facts of Dodgson's life with relative accuracy. The general tenor of the book can only be described as childish, with sentences like "One day, when Charles was feeling silly, he wrote part of a silly poem," and I can't help but wonder if it is not possible to

write in simple words without writing for simple minds. The habit of referring to grown Mr. Dodgson throughout the book as "Charles" is especially annoying and I'm sure Dean Liddell would hardly cotton to being called "Charles' boss." The book is primarily illustrated with Victorian prints, Carroll's photos and drawings, and Tenniel illustrations, all of which work quite well to complement the text. Three original illustrations by Steven Gaston Dobson, who also illustrated the cover, are uninspired but typical of this type of book. Though I wished for more from this book, it is nonetheless good to see information about Dodgson's life and works brought to a generation which is not yet ready for a full-scale biography.



Mountain Craftsman Goes Through the Looking-Glass

Tom Wolfe, a wood-carver from West Jefferson, NC, has created a charming series of characters from *Through the Looking-Glass* and *Alice*. Mr. Wolfe studied the works of many illustrators before carving five Carrollian characters—the Lion, the Unicorn, Alice, the White Rabbit, and the Hatter. Each original woodcarving was used to make a master mold from which resin figures are cast. Each figure is then hand painted. Mr. Wolfe has also carved a figurine of the Walrus which is not yet available as a cast model. Mr. Wolfe's creations have a rustic charm sel-

dom seen in *Alice* figurines and are a wonderful merging of Appalachian craftsmanship and Carrollian whimsy. Mr. Wolfe has also written a book titled *Through the Looking-Glass with Tom Wolfe* which gives step-by-step instructions for carving the Walrus as well as giving plans and full-color photographs of the other figures. Each figurine sells for \$31.00 plus \$3.75 shipping (or \$7.00 shipping for all 5). The book sells for \$12.95 plus \$3.75 shipping. Order from Mountain Meadow Studio, P. O. Box 831, West Jefferson, NC, 28964.

Book Sale • Book Sale • Book Sale

The University Press of Virginia has elected to discontinue three titles published by the LCSNA in years past, and as a result we are able to offer copies of these books to members at a substantial discount. The books are *Lewis Carroll's Library* (originally \$15.00), a reproduction of the auction catalogue of Carroll's estate; *Soaring With the Dodo* (originally \$22.50), a superb collection of essays published in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Carroll's birth; and *Lewis Carroll An Annotated International Bibliography 1960-1977* (originally \$30.00), Edward Guiliano's definitive bibliographical work on this important period in Carroll studies. The LCSNA now has a limited supply of each of these titles which are available for purchase at the following prices: Any 1 book—\$8.00;

2 books—\$15.00; 3 books—\$20.00; 4 or more books \$5.00 each. Prices include shipping. We hope the availability of these books at such low prices will help bring them to those who have not had a chance to purchase them previously. If you already have copies, consider buying copies for your local library and spreading information about Carroll and the LCSNA to others. Remember, too, that the Society's recently published edition of *The Hunting of the Snark*, illustrated by Jonathan Dixon (see meeting report), is still available (\$15.95 + \$2.00 shipping for the regular edition and \$75.00 + \$2.00 shipping for the very few remaining copies of the limited edition). All orders should be addressed to: LCSNA Publications, 1092 W. 4th St., Winston-Salem, N.C., 27101.



Carrollian Notes

1994 Conference Scheduled

The Second International Lewis Carroll Conference will be held on July 9–12, 1994, at the Graylyn Executive Conference Center of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C. In planning the conference, the LCSNA hopes to capitalize on the success of the International Conference held in Oxford in 1989. The conference had originally been scheduled to take place at Princeton University, but various University conflicts prevented holding the gathering in that locale. Graylyn is a restored stone mansion reminiscent of the estates on which Carroll often spent his holidays, and we hope that the conference will combine high academic standards with the pleasure of a weekend at an English manor. The conference will include elegant lodging, and superb meals for three days and nights, as well as a full schedule of speakers, films, performances, exhibitions, and other events. The cost for the full conference package will be \$500, which includes all meals and other amenities. Space will be limited, and reservations will be accepted beginning May 1, 1993. Mark your calendars for this important event in Carroll studies, and watch this space for further announcements. Members who wish to assist in the planning of the conference or who have ideas they would like to share with the conference committee should contact the editor.

Catalogue Features Spectacular Items

Catalogue number 46, *Rare and Collectible Books*, issued by the firm of Justin G. Schiller, Ltd., includes only 15 Lewis Carroll items, but several of them are worthy of special mention. An original Carroll photograph of Irene MacDonald,

George MacDonald's daughter, is priced at \$15,000. Presentation copies of *Phantasmagoria*, *Through the Looking-Glass*, *The Hunting of the Snark* (in the dark bluish-green presentation binding),

A Tangled Tale (inscribed to Carroll's nephew and biographer Stuart Dodgson Collingwood), *Alice's Adventures Underground*, and *The Nursery Alice* are priced from \$4500 to \$12,000. The catalogue also includes Alice Hargreaves' own copy, by way of the Leicester Harmsworth collection, of Vladimir Nabokov's famous 1923 translation of *Alice* into Russian (\$12,500). If you happen to be Christmas shopping for this editor, however, I'll be happy with item number 101—copies of the first, second, fourth, and fifth editions of *Eight or Nine Wise Words About Letter Writing*, plus five proof copies of the 1890 second edition, each meticulously hand-corrected by Carroll in his characteristic purple ink. This is truly an amazing archive which allows one to see Dodgson editing a pamphlet through successive printings, revising and honing the text to what he considered perfection. There are 190 words and/or notations by Dodgson relevant to amending the text in these five booklets. The collection, access to which will certainly be essential to any student of this particular Carroll piece, may be purchased for me for a mere \$25,000 (I'll pay the postage).

The Oddest Carroll Publication Ever

I may get some arguments on this, because there have certainly been a plethora of odd Carrollian publications over the years, but I recently acquired one which seems to beat them all. The publication is titled *Text Vest I—Jabberwocky*, and is a vest (no, I will not wear it to a meeting) made of heavy weight handmade paper which incorporates into its design the text of Carroll's poem "Jabberwocky" in both English and French. This paper garment comes in a custom made cardboard case with a hand printed limitation notice signed by the designer. My copy also included a picture of the designer wearing her creation, and she looks far better in it than I would. The vest, a product of a group of Australians, was designed by Dorothy Herel, made by Michel Guet, and printed by Thierry Bouchard. The publication was limited to an edition of 20 copies and was printed in July of 1991. There is no indication as to who came up with the idea for this apparent series of wearable literature, but the project was funded by the Australia Council and the Australian Federal Government's Arts Funding and Advisory Body—and we cannot even get money from the National Endowment for the Humanities to assist with the publication of Carroll's complete pamphlets!

Last issue in this corner we discussed the details of an American piracy of *Alice*

printed in a periodical. Such publications were not uncommon during the latter part of the 19th century, as we learned when Kay Rossman informed us of a new acquisition to her growing Lewis Carroll collection. *The Elocutionist Journal* of March, 1880, includes the first half of Kate Frieligrath-Kroeker's play of *Alice* and a note indicating that the conclusion is to be published in the succeeding issue. This play, the first published dramatic adaptation of *Alice*, was published in book form as part of a collection of children's plays in London in 1880, and we assume that this periodical appearance is a reprint of that appearance. Though it is highly unlikely that this appearance precedes the London book version, it certainly precedes what was previously thought to be the first American edition, a book version published in 1882. So, not only was *Alice* first published in America in a periodical, but the first printed dramatic adaptation made its American debut in a periodical as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHER'S

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From Our Far-flung



Correspondents

Alice Berkey writes to inform us that Joseph Horovitz's ballet of *Alice in Wonderland* (see KL 42) is available on cassette tape. Order Max Sound #MSCB1 from your local music store.

Southern Illinois University Press (P.O. Box 3697, Carbondale, IL, 62902) will publish *Shattered Applause*, a biography of Eva Le Gallienne in December. This first full-length biography of the woman who three times helped bring *Alice in Wonderland* to Broadway (see KL 38) is written by Robert A. Schanke and includes a foreword by May Sarton. The book retails for \$39.95 and should be available through your local bookseller.

The Salvador Dali Museum (1000 Third St. South, St. Petersburg, FL, 33701) is currently holding an exhibit titled "Tales of Fantasy: *Alice in Wonderland* & Hans Christian Andersen" which features Dali's illustrations for *Alice*. The notes for the exhibit, which runs through January 25, 1993, include a brief history of Dali's use of the girl with the skipping rope, who first appeared in his work in the 1930s and was probably derived from Giorgio De Chirico's 1914 painting *Mystery and Melancholy of a Street*.

While visiting in California you might want to stay at the Jabberwock Inn in Monterey. Barbara and Jim Allen have decorated each room of this Victorian bed and breakfast with Alice memorabilia and guests may be surprised that a mirror is needed to unravel some messages or menus, while some of the clocks on the premises run backwards. For reservations call (408) 372-4777.

Randy Greif, an electronic musician who has been described as "The Mad Sampler" has released the first two CDs of a five CD *Alice in Wonderland* adaptation. Greif has taken an early 1960s spoken recording and "added a barrage of aural cues and backdrops . . . reggae dub techniques, Gregorian chant samples, tubular bells, ethnic percussion and a greater number of unplaceable sounds." The initial release, limited to 450 copies, is on the Staalplaat label. Additional copies should be available when the entire set is finished.

Alitji in Dreamland, an adaptation of *Alice* into the Pitjantjatjara language of the Australian outback, has been reissued by Ten Speed Press (800-841-BOOK) for \$16.95. The original illustrations by Byron Sewell have been replaced with pictures by Donna Leslie.

Martha Rasmussen, editor of *Martha's KidLit Newsletter*, writes that she is planning a special Lewis Carroll issue for Christmas 1993. Contributions or requests for a copy of the issue (single issues of this 8-page newsletter sell for \$4.50) may be sent to the editor at Box 1488, Ames, Iowa, 50010.

Boxgrove Arts (11 Eaton Court, Boxgrove Ave., Guildford, Surrey, GU1 1VD, England) offer a charming series of "Alice in Guildford Cards," with original drawings of various Alice and Carroll-related sights around that town. The seven cards retail for \$1.00 each, with airmail postage additional.

The Hartley House Theatre (413 W. 46th St., New York) presented *The Alice-in-Wonderland Game*, a "musical romp through the zany world of Lewis Carroll, featuring much on-stage audience participation," from October 17 through November 15. The production was conceived and adapted by Lee Frank with music by Gerald Jay Markoe.

The 1992 holiday catalogue from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (800-468-7386) offers a set of two porcelain ornaments based on Tenniel's drawings of the White Rabbit and the Cheshire Cat for \$12.00 plus shipping.

Most members have received a copy of the catalogue from *Alice in Rubberland Fantasy Stamps*, but if you have not, be sure to write them at Box 2735, Los Angeles, CA, 90078. The catalogue includes a wide range of *Alice* rubber stamps, stickers, figurines, plus good buys on the "Tweedledum Game" and the *Alice* tarot cards. Be sure to check out their own custom-designed T-shirt, which might be subtitled "And God Created Alice."

Cowtan & Tout (D & D Building, 979 Third Ave., NY, 10022) offers a *Wonderland* fabric available through your designer. The fabric is blue with brightly colored characters based on Tenniel's drawings, playing cards, and even a tiny golden key.

Barnes and Noble of New York offers in their catalogue a Great Writers Calendar for 1993 which includes a page devoted to Lewis Carroll. Price: \$9.95

For assistance in preparing this issue we would like to thank: Alice Berkey, Sandor Burstein, Joseph Desy, August Imholtz, Stephanie Lovett, Stan Marx, Lucille Posner, Martha Rasmussen, Kay Rossman, David & Maxine Schaefer, Justin Schiller, and Michael Welch.

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